

like to get in this queue. So we make sure, maybe we can specify the times as well so that we know that we have got enough time before 11:30.

How much time does the Senator from Virginia—

Mr. WARNER. I say to my distinguished colleague, about 10 minutes.

Mr. CONRAD. How much time does the Senator from Maryland seek?

Mr. SARBANES. How much time would there be available?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. We have until 11:30 in morning business.

Mr. CONRAD. So there would be 25 minutes.

Mr. SARBANES. Yes. Equally divided?

Mr. CONRAD. Would that be fair for the Senator, if we equally divide the remaining time?

Mr. BENNETT. Reserving the right to object, I want to accommodate my friend and more senior colleague, but I had understood that the time was equally divided between the two sides; the Republicans would have 11 to 11:30, and the Democrats from 10:30 to 11. If that were not done, I would be more than happy to split the time available, after the Senator from Virginia is finished, with the Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 10 minutes for the Senator from Virginia, followed by the Senator from Maryland for 8 minutes, the Senator from Utah for 8 minutes, and 8 minutes for the Senator from North Dakota.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. WARNER. Reserving the right to object, and then the time remaining would be accorded to someone on this side of the aisle, should that person appear to seek that recognition?

Mr. CONRAD. I think that will actually use up all the time, I say to the Senator.

Mr. WARNER. If there is time remaining, then it would return to this side.

Mr. CONRAD. All right.

Mr. WARNER. I do not object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Virginia.

SUPPORTING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise this morning with a deep sense of humility to express this Senator's gratitude for the courage and bravery being displayed from our President, Commander in Chief, to the Secretaries of State and Defense, and to, particularly, General Franks and General Abizaid, and those immediately in charge of the operations in Iraq, and, most importantly, to the men and women of the Armed Forces under these commands, and their families.

We all start this morning with expressing our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones who have lost

members of the Armed Forces. That is the cost of freedom.

As we watch unfolding the pictorial representation of these families, as they boldly step up to appear on media, all of us cannot but be heartened by the courage that the families are showing, and as exemplified by the men and women in uniform fighting this battle.

I thought to myself, there were roughly 1,300,000 men and women on active duty prior to the commencement of the larger operations in Iraq. And as the buildup progressed, the President called up roughly 300,000—somewhat short of that—so for ease of mathematics, about 1.5 million are now on active service, together with their families. I always mention the families.

In that 1.5 million, if you juxtapose it with the total population of this Nation of 290 million, roughly one-half of 1 percent—one-half of 1 percent—of our population is out there assuming the full risks of loss of life and limb to defend freedom and to defend this Nation. That shows the magnitude of the depth of gratitude that we have to all those who are engaged in this conflict.

We have conducted—and I commend the administration—each morning, at 9 o'clock, a briefing in S-407. All Senators are invited. We have had very good attendance. We will have, this afternoon, from 5:30 to 6:30, a briefing with the Secretary of Defense in S-407 again for all Senators. But the questions raised there are very good questions. They are tough questions.

I assure America that the Senate is involved in its oversight responsibilities as a coequal branch in this conflict, in the judgment of this Senator. I am proud of the large participation from numbers of our Senators—questions about the magnitude of the battle plan; is that sufficient?

Our colleague from North Dakota just mentioned that there had been a lot of criticism. That is part of the freedoms we enjoy. Those who have served honorably in our Armed Forces are coming forth with their expertise. Frankly, I follow it very carefully. I think it has been constructive on the whole. Nevertheless, the Secretary of Defense, here in the Vice President's office yesterday afternoon when he met with several of us, was asked questions on the battle plan. He very firmly said this battle plan was conceived carefully. It went through the Joint Chiefs, not once, not twice, but perhaps a dozen times, and was shared with our principal ally, Great Britain, and others. I have total confidence in the manner in which this war is being conducted by our military commanders and, indeed, by the Commander in Chief, the President.

The question of the prisoners of war is very much on our minds. It is hoped that the Senate will address this issue in the near future. I have been in consultation, as have other Senators, with the distinguished leadership on both sides. It is important that this institution express its strong sentiment for

the care and protection and adherence to international law as this conflict ensues.

The coalition has been very substantial, over 40 nations. I will ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD following my remarks a communication from the distinguished Ambassador to the United States from Australia, Mr. Michael Thawley, along with the comments of the Prime Minister of Australia.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. WARNER. Australia has been a vital part of the coalition from the beginning. They have forces in country in Iraq now assisting in many aspects for the success of this operation.

This morning at around 6:30, I watched the Prime Minister of Great Britain address Parliament just prior to his departure for the United States to confer with our President today. In the course of that dissertation—it is always fascinating for those of us in the Congress to watch their freewheeling system—the first question out of the box to the Prime Minister: Will you talk to the President, impressing upon him the need to address the conflict in the Middle East, most specifically, the remarks made by the President just recently as to reasserting once again the efforts of this President to foster the peace process.

This brings to mind a thought this Senator has had for some time as to one idea—it is just an idea, a concept, a concept that might help to bring about some stability in that region—a cessation of some hopefully large measure of the conflict so that the talks can get under way. It is difficult to see how any constructive talks can take place without the cessation of the fighting, the human bombing employed by the Palestinians, and the retaliation, that is really necessary but all too often takes place before the cameras, as a disproportionate use of force in the eyes of the world, by the Israelis, who have been afflicted so grievously by these human bombs.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD a letter I wrote to the President just a week or so ago, on March 14.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 2.)

Mr. WARNER. I will now address the contents of the letter.

Dear Mr. President: I would like to commend you on the step you took today to give new impetus to the Middle East process by announcing that it was time to share with Israel and the Palestinians the road map to peace that the United States has developed with its "Quartet" partners. This is a welcome and timely initiative, given the complex way in which the Middle East conflict, Iraq and the global war against terrorism are intertwined.

I pointed out that I have given basically this same set of remarks in concept on the floor three times. I have

addressed the NATO ambassadors and given this concept. It is one basically that can help to bring about a measure of stability and cessation to the fighting; that is, at the invitation of the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, particularly now that the new Prime Minister has been designated, at that invitation, that NATO be asked to look at whether or not they could constitute a peace-keeping force to bring in to work in coordination with the security structures of both the people of Israel and the people of Palestine in hopes that the fighting can be brought under control such that the peace talks can originate. That is something I believe in strongly because it has a direct relationship, a threat to not only our forces but the other forces throughout the world of the hatred generated among militants in that region, generated by this conflict.

To the degree this conflict can be brought under control and peace talks initiated, hopefully there will be a commensurate lessening of the threat to our forces, not only the military but our embassies and others abroad. It is an important step. I commend our President. I hope they will consider this concept as they proceed.

The war we are witnessing in Iraq was a last resort to disarm a regime that for more than 12 years has defied the international community and brutalized its own people. Despicable tactics Iraqis are using on the battlefield and the way in which they are treating some of the POWs are further proof of the willingness of this regime to flout international law and the laws of human decency. The coalition is taking great efforts to protect innocent civilians and minimize civilian casualties. Humanitarian assistance—food, water, and medicine—is already being delivered. That will increase in the days ahead hopefully.

Once this regime is removed, the Iraqi people can hopefully look forward to a measure of the freedom they have not experienced these many years, governed by a rule of law of their own design.

I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

EMBASSY OF AUSTRALIA,
Washington, DC, March 21, 2003.

Hon. JOHN WARNER,
U.S. Senator, Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: I just wanted to thank you very much for your reference in the Senate debate yesterday to the support of Australian armed forces in the current fighting in Iraq. It was greatly appreciated. It is nice to know that our contribution is valued.

You might like to see the Prime Minister's comments about the role of our alliance with the United States in the speech he made to the Australian parliament on our commitment. I also attach his address to the nation in which he set out the reasons why the Government had authorized the engagement of Australian forces in military action.

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL THAWLEY,
Ambassador.

EXTRACT FROM PRIME MINISTER HOWARD'S
STATEMENT TO THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT, 18, MARCH 2003

Our alliance with the United States is unapologetically a factor in the decision that we have taken. The crucial, long-term value of the United States alliance should always be a factor in any major national security decision taken by Australia.

America has given strong leadership to the world on the issue of Iraq. The Security Council would not have been re-energised, the United Nations would not have been re-energised, had it not been for the action of the United States returning the issue to the United Nations in September of last year. We have supported the American position on this issue because we share their concerns and we share their worries about the future if Iraq is left unattended to. Alliances are two-way processes and, where we are in agreement, we should not leave it to the United States to do all of the heavy lifting just because they are the world's superpower. To do so would undermine one of the most important relationships we have and, in an increasingly globalised and borderless world, the relationship between Australia and the United States will become more rather than less important as the years go by.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER, THE
HON. JOHN HOWARD, MP, ADDRESS TO THE
NATION, MARCH 20, 2003

Good evening: The Government has decided to commit Australian forces to action to disarm Iraq because we believe it is right, it is lawful and it's in Australia's national interest.

We are determined to join other countries to deprive Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction, its chemical and biological weapons, which even in minute quantities are capable of causing death and destruction on a mammoth scale.

Iraq had been an aggressor in the past against its neighbours and even its own people. If Iraq is allowed to keep these weapons not only might she use them again but moreover other rogue countries will copy Iraq knowing that the world will do nothing to stop them.

And the more countries that have these weapons—countries run by despotic regimes—the greater becomes the likelihood that these weapons will fall into the hands of terrorists. If that happens can anyone doubt that the terrorists will use them whatever the cost might be?

The attacks on the 11th of September and in Bali showed that international terrorists have no regard for human life no matter what the nationality of their victims may be.

Iraq had long supported international terrorism. Saddam Hussein pays \$25,000 to each family of Palestinian suicide bombers who wreak such murderous havoc in Israel. He has sheltered and sponsored many terrorist groups.

International terrorism knows no borders. We have learnt that to our cost. Australia and Australians anywhere in the world are as much targets as any other western country and its people.

Therefore the possession of chemical, biological, or even worse still, nuclear weapons by a terrorist network would be a direct undeniable and lethal threat to Australia and its people.

That is the reason above all others why I passionately believe that action must be taken to disarm Iraq. Not only will it take dangerous weapons from that country but it will send a clear signal to other rogue states and terrorists groups like Al Qaeda which

clearly want such weapons that the world is prepared to take a stand.

There's also another reason and that is our close security alliance with the United States. The Americans have helped us in the past and the United States is very important to Australia's long-term security.

It is critical that we maintain the involvement of the United States in our own region where at present there are real concerns about the dangerous behaviour of North Korea.

The relationship between our two countries will grow more rather than less important as the years go by.

A key element of our close friendship with the United States and indeed with the British is our full and intimate sharing of intelligence material.

In the difficult fight against the new menace of international terrorism there is nothing more crucial than timely and accurate intelligence. This is a priceless component of our relationship with our two very close allies.

There is nothing comparable to be found in any other relationship—nothing more relevant indeed to the challenges of the contemporary world.

I know that some people are saying that what we have done makes it more likely that terrorists will attack Australia.

Australia has been a terrorist target at least since the 11th of September 2001.

Australia is a western country with western values. Nothing will or should change that. That is why we are a target.

Remember that bin Laden specifically targeted Australia because of our intervention to save the people of East Timor.

Does any Australian seriously suggest that if bin Laden's warning had come before the East Timor action we should have caved in and changed our policy. That will never be the Australian way.

We believe that so far from our action in Iraq increasing the terrorist threat it will, by stopping the spread of chemical and biological weapons, make it less likely that a devastating terrorist attack will be carried out against Australia.

I want to assure all of you that the action we are taking is fully legal under international law. Back in the early 1990s resolutions were passed by the Security Council authorizing military action against Iraq.

That action was only suspended on condition that Iraq gave up its weapons of mass destruction. Clearly we all know this has not happened. As a result the authority to take military action under those earlier resolutions has revived.

America's critics both here and abroad have been both opportunistic and inconsistent. They know and admit that weapons inspectors only returned to Iraq because of the pressure of the American military buildup. Yet they have persistently criticized American policy.

Apparently they believe that a quarter of a million American, British and indeed Australian troops should stay in the desert doing nothing indefinitely. We all know that if the troops had been withdrawn Iraq would have immediately stopped its minimal co-operation with the inspectors.

Another point I'd make to you very strongly is that we're not dealing here with a regime of ordinary brutality. There are many dictatorships in the world. But this is a dictatorship of a particularly horrific kind.

His is an appalling regime: its torture, its use of rape as an instrument of intimidation, the cruelty to children to extract confessions from parents. It is a terrible catalogue of inflicting human misery on a people who deserve much better.

This week, the Times of London detailed the use of a human shredding machine as a

vehicle for putting to death critics of Saddam Hussein. This is the man, this is the apparatus of terror we are dealing with.

The removal of Saddam Hussein will lift this immense burden of terror from the Iraqi people.

Our argument is with Saddam Hussein's regime. It is certainly not with Islam.

Australians of an Arab background or of the Islamic faith are a treasured part of our community. Over the weeks ahead and beyond we should all extend to them the hand of Australian mateship.

To those in the community who may not agree with me, please vent your anger against me and towards the government. Remember that our forces are on duty in the Gulf in our name and doing their job in the best traditions of Australia's defence forces.

Can I say something that I know will find an echo from all of you whether or not you agree with the Government. And that is to say to the men and women of the Australian Defence Force in the Gulf—we admire you, we are thinking of you, we want all of you to come back home safe and sound. We care for and we anguish with your loved ones back here in Australia. Our prayers and our hopes are with all of you.

We now live in a world made very different by the scourge of international terrorism.

This has been a very difficult decision for the Government but a decision which is good for Australia's long term security and the cause of a safer world. Good night.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2003.

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I would like to commend you on the step you took today to give new impetus to the Middle East peace process by announcing that it was time to share with Israel and the Palestinians the road map to peace that the United States has developed with its "Quartet" partners. This is a welcome and timely initiative, given the complex way in which the Middle East conflict, Iraq and the global war against terrorism are intertwined.

The festering hostilities in the Middle East are an enormous human tragedy. Along with you, and many others, I refuse to accept that this is a conflict without end. You have articulated a vision of an Israeli and a Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security. That is a bold initiative that deserves strong international support. With the Israeli elections concluded, and the imminent confirmation of a Palestinian Prime Minister, you are right to refocus international attention on the Middle East peace process.

Mr. President, in August 2002, I wrote to you to propose an idea concerning the possibility of offering NATO peacekeepers to help implement a cease-fire in the Middle East. I have spoken of this idea numerous times on the Senate Floor. I am now even more convinced that the United States and its NATO partners should consider an additional element for the "road map" concept: NATO should offer, and I stress the word "offer," to provide a peacekeeping force, once a cease-fire has been established by the Israeli Government and the Palestinian authority. This NATO force would serve in support of the cease-fire mechanisms agreed to by Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The NATO offer would have to be willingly accepted by both governments, and it in no way should be viewed as a challenge to either side's sovereignty. The acceptance of this offer would have to be coupled with a commitment by Israel and the Palestinian Authority to cooperate in every way possible to permit the peacekeeping mission to succeed.

I fully recognize that this would not be a risk-free operation for the participating

NATO forces. But I nonetheless believe that the offer of peacekeepers from NATO would have many benefits. First, it would demonstrate a strong international commitment to peace in the Middle East. Second, it would offer the prospect of a peacekeeping force that is ready today. It is highly capable, rapidly deployable, and has a proven record of success in the Balkans. A NATO peacekeeping force is likely to be acceptable to both parties, given the traditional European sympathy for the Palestinian cause and the traditional United States support of Israel.

Third, this would be a worthy post-Cold War mission for NATO in a region where NATO member countries have legitimate national security interests. It could even be an area of possible collaboration with Russia through the NATO-Russia Council. A NATO peacekeeping mission in the Middle East would be wholly consistent with the Alliance's new Strategic Concept. Approved at the NATO Summit in Washington in April 1999, the new Strategic Concept envisioned so called "out-of-area" operations for NATO.

Given the fractious debate in NATO over Iraq and the defense of Turkey, it would be important to show that NATO can work together to make a positive contribution to solving one of the most challenging security issues of our day.

There will be many detractors to the idea of sending NATO peacekeepers to the Middle East to help implement a cease-fire. But I think there is a broad agreement on the imperative of giving new hope to the peace process and redoubling diplomatic efforts to keep Israel and the Palestinians moving on the road to peace. Peacekeepers coming from many NATO nations could give new hope and confidence to the peoples of Israel and Palestine that there could soon be an end to the violence that overhangs their daily lives.

Mr. President, I hope that you will receive this idea in the constructive spirit in which it is offered.

With kind regards, I am
Respectfully,

JOHN WARNER,
Chairman.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

TAX CUTS

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the budget resolution on which we will be voting later this afternoon. Let me note at the outset that this budget resolution is one of the most important documents we will consider in the Senate. It contains within it thousands of decisions with respect to our national life.

We really set our national priorities by our budget, making fundamental decisions within the budget—how much shall we allot for this spending program, what shall we do on the tax side. In addition, the aggregate budget and the projected deficit can have a profound effect upon our overall economy, not only this year but extending well into future years.

We are considering this budget in the context, first and foremost, of the military conflict in Iraq and, secondly, in the context of a domestic economy which is clearly sputtering.

Last month, we lost over 300,000 private sector jobs. The number of long-term unemployed continues to go up. Now almost 2 million people have been out of work for more than 26 weeks. Consumer confidence is at a nine-year low.

Moreover, our fiscal situation has deteriorated significantly over the course of this administration. In January of 2001, when President Bush took office, the Congressional Budget Office was projecting a budget surplus over 10 years of \$5.6 trillion. In fact, the President pointed to that projected surplus as a rationale for doing the 2001 tax cuts. Now the Congressional Budget Office is projecting a \$2.1 trillion deficit over the same period, assuming the President's tax proposals are adopted. That is a swing of more than \$7.5 trillion in our fiscal position, from a projected surplus of \$5.6 trillion to a projected deficit of \$2.1 trillion. Despite this severe economic deficit outlook, the fight over this budget resolution has focused primarily on whether to encompass within it sufficient room for another very large tax cut which the President is seeking.

It is asserted by the Administration that this is going to be a growth stimulus package. It is not going to be a growth stimulus package. It is only a flagrant example of discredited trickle-down economics.

Instead, this budget is going to drive us deeper into the deficit and debt hole. It is going to leave us with deficits projected out into the indefinite future. We are really mortgaging away our future. This is bad macroeconomic policy.

In addition, within the budget, our urgent national priorities are not being adequately addressed. There is not enough for homeland defense. We have a pressing health care problem in this country, with regard to both the uninsured and prescription drug benefits for our senior citizens. We have an affordable housing crisis, in which millions of working families cannot afford even a modest apartment in many high-cost cities. We have the question of supporting our first responders. The mayors across the country are saying they are not getting sufficient support from the Federal level in order to meet their responsibilities. Instead of providing fully for education so we leave no child behind, the proposed tax cuts are designed to leave no millionaire behind.

But I want to address a somewhat broader issue dealing with fairness and equity. I first want to note that in every previous instance when we went to war, we didn't cut taxes; we raised taxes to help pay for the war and to meet its costs. The President has now submitted a \$75 billion supplemental, and it is very clear that that is a down-payment only. No one asserts that is going to cover the full cost of the war and the reconstruction. So clearly the \$75 billion represents the initial down-payment, and there is more to follow.

That further raises the question whether this is the appropriate time to commit away significant resources to a tax cut to benefit the wealthy. Analysis of the tax cut, which the President